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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRATISLAVA 000058

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FOR AMB. DAVID ZWEIFEL, OIG/ISP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: AMGT ASIG PHUM EGEN LO

SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA REONSE TO OIG INQUIRY ON REQUIRED REPORTING

REF: STATE 9541

¶1. Below are Embassy Bratislava's responses to the queries in reftel.

a. Which mandated reports require most time and attention from Department personnel at your embassy?

The Human Rights Report, the Trafficking in Persons Report, and the Investment Climate Statement are the most time consuming at our post. Slightly less onerous are the International Religious Freedom Report, the INCER report, and the Counter Terrorism report.

b. What section or unit is assigned responsibility for gathering information and preparing these reports?

The Pol/Econ section.

c. How many employees are involved in preparing and submitting each report? Please specify Department direct hire staff, local employees, eligible family members, contractors or other.

Human Rights Report: 5 (one intern, two LES, two direct hires)

Trafficking in Persons Report: 2 (one LES, one direct hire)

Investment Climate Statement: 3 (one LES, two direct hires)

International Religious Freedom: 2 (one LES, one direct hire)

INCER: 4 (two LES, two direct hires)

Counter Terrorism: 1 (one direct hire)

d. How many person hours (by report and employee category) are required to prepare each of the mandated reports? What proportion of the embassy or mission's total personnel or other resources does this represent?

Human Rights Report: 5 (one intern-100 hours, two LES-100 hours total, two direct hires-150 hours total)

Trafficking in Persons Report: 2 (one LES-30 hours, one direct hire-50 hours)

Investment Climate Statement: 3 (one LES, two direct hires-40 hours)

International Religious Freedom: 2 (one LES-20 hours, one direct hire-20 hours)

INCER: 4 (two LES-40 hours, two direct hires-20 hours)

Counter Terrorism: 1 (one direct hire-40 hours)

e. Does required reporting, as it is currently being produced, support and reinforce other mission goals or divert resources from them?

Generally, we believe that the required reporting supports our mission goals. The level of detail required by some of the reports, however, represents a diversion from our efforts to fulfill mission goals.

f. What resource measures has the embassy taken (redirecting personnel to this instead of other duties, hiring additional local staff or eligible family members, requesting additional fulltime positions) to fulfill requirements for mandated

reporting?

We have not hired additional personnel, but have found that our summer intern in the Pol/Econ section can provide very useful assistance, particularly in the information gathering phase of the Human Rights report. We have very experienced LES who have covered these topics for many years, and they are also able to often identify the best sources of information.

g. Which parts of the process (information gathering, analysis, drafting, internal editing, negotiation of the final text with Washington) consume the most resources?

Information gathering consumes the most resources, followed by drafting. Depending on the report, the negotiation with Washington can also be time consuming.

h. How clear and helpful are Department instructions for preparing each of these reports?

The instructions for most of these reports are so lengthy that they are often not utilized effectively. A concise version, especially one that highlights major differences from previous years' reports, would be welcomed.

i. What percentage of the embassy's overall reporting on an issue such as human rights or trafficking in persons does the annual required draft represent? Does your post submit reporting cables on these issues throughout the year, or gather and discuss information but submit it formally primarily in the required annual draft?

Embassy Bratislava devotes a considerable amount of its reporting to human rights and democracy issues. We estimate that

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we send in at least 30 cables over the course of a year on topics that are captured in the human rights report, with a particular emphasis on judiciary, rule of law, minority issues, and extremism.

j. Do other mission agencies besides the Department make significant contributions to the preparation of mandated reporting in these areas?

No, with the exception of some Commerce contributions to the investment climate statement.

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